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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 810

By Ford S

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Derward Trent of  
Hamblen County.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the untimely death of Mr. Derward Trent; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Trent was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, a longtime resident of Hamblen County, Mr. Trent was a highly respected member of the Morristown community; and

WHEREAS, he served with acumen as Hamblen County Sheriff, Tennessee State Representative, and as an accomplished farmer and businessman, in which positions he earned great respect for the superior quality of his work; and

WHEREAS, committed to academic excellence, Derward Trent attended the University of Tennessee; his studies were interrupted in 1939 by World War II, as he was called to serve in the U.S. Army; he actively served in Europe throughout the war under General George Patton; and

WHEREAS, as a 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant, he skillfully commanded an infantry company and was a member of an outfit that liberated prisoners at the Buchenwald concentration camp, the second-largest Nazi concentration camp in Germany; and

WHEREAS, after his meritorious term of service ended and the war was over, Mr. Trent returned to college and earned a degree in Animal Husbandry; and

WHEREAS, on May 29, 1948, Derward Trent and Mary Ferguson were joined in holy matrimony; this fine couple shared a blissful union that produced three children; and

WHEREAS, he subsequently returned to Hamblen County and opened his own meatpacking business; and

WHEREAS, it was this business venture that best demonstrated his remarkable character; while the business experienced difficulties and eventually shut down, Mr. Trent assumed responsibility for the losses by paying both his own and his partners' creditors in full, never considering claiming bankruptcy; and

WHEREAS, having remained in the U.S. Army Reserves, Mr. Trent courageously returned to action during the Korean War serving with alacrity as the Captain and commander of a headquarter's company; and

WHEREAS, this remarkable man began his estimable political career in 1960, when he was elected Sheriff of Hamblen County; he was elected to a second two-year term in 1962; and

WHEREAS, a dedicated public servant, Mr. Trent sacrificed his personal safety and comfort for the people he represented; during his service as Sheriff, he was ambushed and shot by suspected bootleggers; and

WHEREAS, undeterred by the experience, Derward Trent continued to honor his commitment to the public, serving with probity as a State Representative for three consecutive two-year terms in the General Assembly beginning in 1965; and

WHEREAS, during his remarkable tenure in the legislature, Mr. Trent was instrumental in establishing the Republican Party as a political force in Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, upon his first election to the House of Representatives, only 24 out of 99 state Representatives were Republicans; however, in the years that followed, the Republican party gained support and numbers; and

WHEREAS, Representative Trent was named Chairman of the Calendar Committee; he ran the committee in a very business-like manner and very strict fashion, utilizing his astute management skill and leadership abilities; and

WHEREAS, a talented businessman, Mr. Trent joined Herbert Bacon, and John F. Dugger, Sr., in obtaining a charter for the Bank of Morristown; they subsequently sold the bank to First Tennessee Bank in 1972; and

WHEREAS, in the mid-1960s, Derward Trent began a successful business relationship with Knoxville businessman Fred D. Bacon, a venture that lasted for four decades; and

WHEREAS, they began working selling government securities and later expanded into a real estate management company that controlled 6,000 apartment units throughout the Southeast; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Benton recently reflected on his relationship with Derward stating, "I just remember him as a very strong person, both physically and with a fine sense of obligation"; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his civic and business obligations, Derward Trent owned a 250-acre cattle farm in eastern Hamblen County for the past 30 years; which was managed by Bobby Anderson; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Anderson called him, "One of the most generous, considerate people I've ever met in my life and yet he didn't want any publicity"; and

WHEREAS, a behind-the-scenes philanthropist, Mr. Trent was a generous and modest man; he never desired credit or attention for his good deeds, and made his donations through the church; and

WHEREAS, Derward Trent was an active and devout member of his church, which he served faithfully for many years; he was a man of great Christian character; and

WHEREAS, Derward Trent was also deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Trent enjoyed the loving companionship of his devoted wife, Mary Ferguson Trent and was the proud parent of Mary Ann Trent Morris and her husband Daniel, Robert Kyle Trent and his wife Gina, and Walter Trent and his wife Patti; and

WHEREAS, he was also the devoted grandparent of eight grandchildren, Jessica and Patrick Morris, Mckenzie, Alex, and Erik Trent, and Derek, Kelli, and Laura Trent; and

WHEREAS, Derward Trent leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we honor the memory of Mr. Derward Trent, accomplished law enforcer, political figure, businessman, farmer, philanthropist, and family man, and reflect fondly upon his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mr. Trent.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.